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September 14, 2018

The Honorable John J. Faso
United States House of Representatives
111 Main Street
Delhi, NY 13753

Dear Representative Faso:

Thank you for the kind words in your September 13 letter, and for your inquiry about reservoir storage and the unusually wet weather in the Catskills this summer.

Our meteorologists and water-supply operators have been tracking Hurricane Florence for more than a week. The current forecast indicates that the remnants of Florence will bring approximately 1-4 inches of rain to the Catskills sometime around September 18. The actual amount of precipitation could be slightly more or less, but not substantial enough to cause widespread flooding upstream or downstream of our reservoirs.

As you might know, last month was the wettest August on record for our Catskill-Delaware watershed. Several parts of the watershed received more than 300 percent of the typical rainfall for the month, causing reservoirs to refill during a time when they usually draw down.

With few exceptions, our Delaware System reservoirs and Ashokan Reservoir have been making maximum or near-maximum releases since the first week of August. We expect those releases to continue for at least the next few weeks. In recent weeks, DEP has also chosen to rely more heavily on our reservoirs in the Catskills to meet the needs of water consumers in New York City. These operational adjustments have created free space in the reservoirs to enhance the flood-attenuation benefits that their dams already provide.

Importantly, DEP's operational adjustments were made with the help of an advanced modeling system and instrumentation the City invested in to balance the need for clean, safe drinking water and the commitments we have made to our neighbors in the watershed and downstream.

Thank you again for reaching out, and I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul V. Rush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul V. Rush, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner